

Hermann Volke



Ihre Freimaurer der angesehener Menden
wirden wie bei dem folgenden Originalen
zusammen beigefügt haben

H. von Hoffmann

Hampton Court. 21. März. 1812.

W. D. von Hoffmann





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THE TRANSFIGURATION

THE
CARTONS
OF
RAPHAEL D'URBINO,

VIZ.

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. The Miraculous Draught of Fishes. | 5. Elymas the Sorcerer struck with |
| 2. Christ's Charge to Peter. | Blindness. |
| 3. The Lame Man Healed. | 6. Paul and Barnabas at Lystra. |
| 4. The Death of Ananias. | 7. Paul Preaching at Athens. |

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

THE TRANSFIGURATION,

WITH

APPROPRIATE DESCRIPTIONS.

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1809.

THE TRANSFIGURATION.

RAPHAEL.

JESUS CHRIST having taken with him the apostles Peter, James, and John, transported them to a high mountain; there he transfigured himself before them. "His face shone as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light." Then appeared unto him Moses and Elias, who were talking with him. A voice issued from a bright cloud, saying—"This is my beloved Son." The disciples, deeply terrified, fell on their faces. Jesus afterwards descended from the mountain, and drove the devil out of the body of an infant whom his disciples were unable to cure.

This is the subject with which Raphael was furnished from Holy Writ. In the sketch before us, it is observable, that this great master, availing himself of the privilege granted to painters and to poets, has united in this composition, two different actions. In artists of less merit, this combination might admit of censure, but, in Raphael, the principles of art disappear before the conceptions of genius. What critic could desire that either part of this performance should be suppressed; or would presume to call this double action a defect, while it presents a connexion so sublime? On the Tabor, the divinity in all his glory—at the foot of the mountain, all the weakness and the sufferings of humanity.

Raphael finished this picture, which is considered his chef d'œuvre, and the finest specimen of the art, a short

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genius; and the carton of Christ's Charge to Peter, and the regular succession of the acts of the apostles, seem greatly to confirm this opinion. However, as it is an argument that probably will not be contested, and cannot be proved, it can only be lamented, that perhaps some accident, or the premature death of that great master*, has deprived the world of an invaluable treasure.

CARTON I.

THE MIRACULOUS DRAUGHT OF FISHES.

And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not, from henceforth thou shalt catch men.—Luke, chap. v. ver. 10.

THIS was an amazing event: but as the principal persons were few, and half of them necessarily engaged in the management of their nets, the historical expression is confined to three figures only, which are those of our Saviour, Peter, and James. The principal figure in this picture is Christ, who is pronouncing the words above quoted, in order to remove the apprehension of Peter, who, in a fine posture of supplication, has just uttered these words, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." Our Saviour's figure and action are perfectly great and graceful; and in his character, divinity, benignity, and tenderness are expressed in the highest degree. In Peter's countenance, fear, wonder, and

* Anno 1520. Æt. 37.

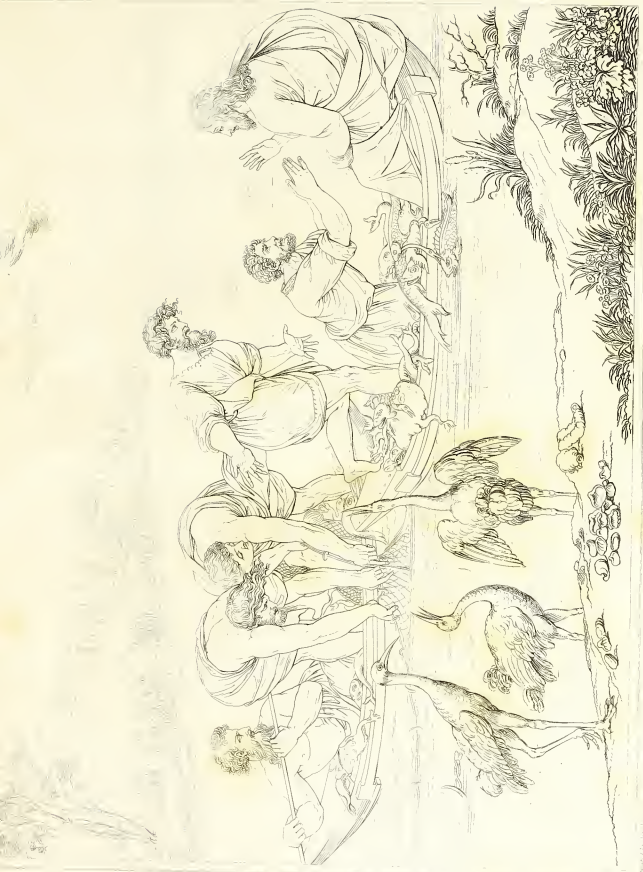


PLATE 111.

Engraved by J. G. Thompson.

THE BIBLE STORY BOOK



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solicitude are blended in a most extraordinary manner, and compose a character of expression worthy of Raphael; the figure in the same boat, supposed to be that of James, is also finely imagined and drawn; awe and attention are strongly marked in his face, and he seems, by his action, to have acquiesced in the supplication of Peter, as acknowledging himself unworthy of being the companion of Divinity. The rest of the figures, as has already been said, are chiefly concerned in attending to their employment, which, as they were in another vessel, naturally engrossed their attention; only the nearest of them seems to have caught some part of the conversation, and appears to listen: this last figure, and another, who are pulling up the net, are finely drawn, contrasted, and foreshortened; and the whole figure of the old man in the stern of the boat, who is very attentive to his business, is extremely fine.

The perspective in this carton (in which the point of sight is placed pretty high) occasions the sea to make a fine back ground for the figures, which, from its natural hue, fails not of shewing the colouring of the figures to the utmost advantage. At a great distance, upon the sea-shore, appear several groups of figures designed in a masterly manner, the principal of which seems to consist of a number of persons who are employed in the baptism of infants. Nothing need be said to the objection commonly made by small critics to the size of the boats, that having been fully answered by Mr. Richardson; who has also mentioned the fine effect of the sea fowl, which are artfully and judiciously placed in the foreground, and indeed could be very ill spared.

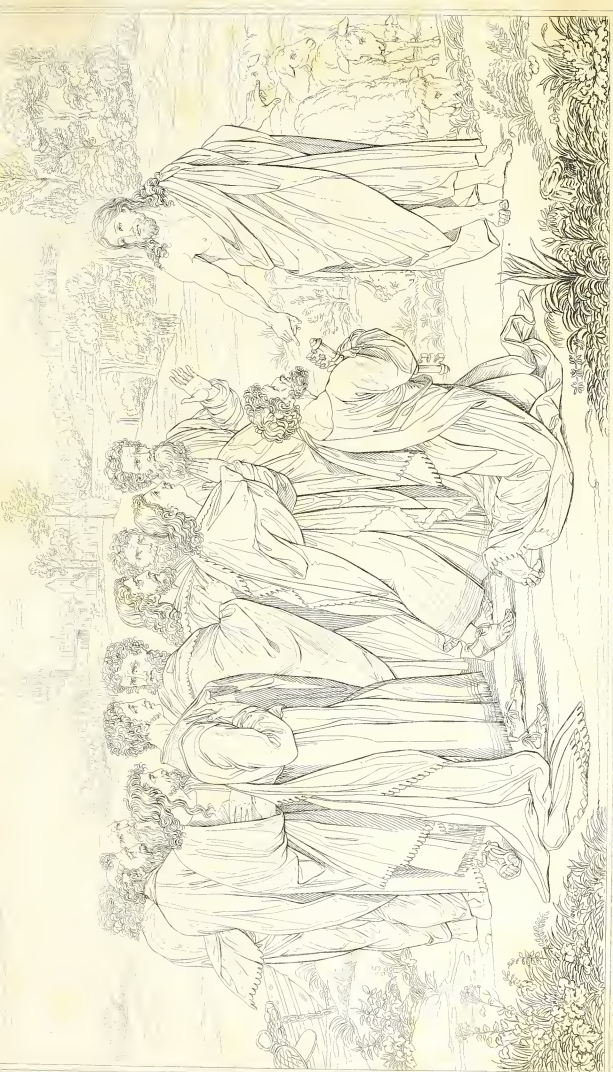
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CARTON II.

CHRIST'S CHARGE TO PETER; COMMONLY CALLED
THE DELIVERY OF THE KEYS.

He said unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Pêter was grieved, because he said unto him the third time, lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, feed my sheep.—John, chap. xxi. ver. 17.

THE principal figure in this picture is that of our Saviour, which Mr. Richardson is of opinion has received some injury, and is not at present what Raphael made it: this supposition; it is believed, has never been contradicted; and whoever attentively compares the taste of design in this figure with those of the apostles, in the same carton, or that of our Saviour in the Miraculous Draught of Fishes, must be convinced that it falls many degrees short of that great painter. Perhaps, by some who may contend for its being Raphael's, it may be urged, that, like Leonardo da Vinci, in a similar case, he was baffled by the greatness of his own idea: but which ever argument holds good, we must be content to take it as it appears. Mr. Richardson also observes, that the time chosen, is the moment of our Lord's having just spoken; and that in consequence of our Saviour's interrogating Peter, "Lovest thou me more than these?" the rest of the apostles were eager to reply to that question, by assuring their Lord, that their love for him was at least equal to Peter's; and this solicitude is finely ex-



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pressed in every character. The next principal figure is that of Peter, who, according to the history, is represented upon his knees, with the utmost humility attending to and receiving the charge given him by his divine master. The head is drawn in profile, and the face is entirely in shadow. It may be here observed, that the shadow cast by Peter's body serves admirably to bring the figure of our Saviour forward, and also to keep the principal group together. The third principal figure is St. John, whose expression and attitude, Mr. Richardson mentions, as an improvement upon the story. He says, our Saviour, by commanding Peter to feed his sheep, seemed to indicate a preference in favour of that apostle (as has been observed); and that St. John, who was the beloved disciple, may, therefore, be supposed to have been under a particular concern on that account: accordingly, he appears to address himself to our Lord with extreme ardour, as if earnestly endeavouring to convince him of the sincerity of his love. The attention of all the apostles is directed to our Saviour, except one, who seems to press forward; and, by turning his head, which is seen between two profiles, hinders the repetition which would have unavoidably happened if he had been looking the same way. The heads of the apostles are amazingly designed, and full of expression; and their attitudes are finely varied and contrasted. The draperies are noble, and well cast; that of our Saviour's only appears to be rather heavy, and unsuitable to him at this time, as being after his resurrection. But, admitting that this figure has suffered, the injury may, in this particular, be attributed to the alteration of it by some other hand. Mr. Richardson, who had studied the cartons, observes, that the small piece of drapery in a part of the garment of the outermost apostle, is of great consequence to this

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picture ; which, being folded as under his arm, breaks the strait line of an unpleasing mass of light, and gives a more graceful form to the whole ; which artifice is also assisted by the boat. Of the same consequence to the principal figure, is the flock of sheep placed behind, which helps to break the lines of the drapery, detach the figure from its ground, and illustrate the history.

CARTON III.

THE LAME MAN HEALED ; COMMONLY CALLED THE
BEAUTIFUL GATE OF THE TEMPLE.

Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have give I thee : in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk.

And he took him by the right hand, and lift him up, and immediately his feet and ancle bones received strength.—
Acts, chap. iii. ver. 6, 7.

THIS truly great composition is divided into three distinct groups, by means of the magnificent columns which appear in the front of the picture, and are a part of the colonade which supports the roof of the portico. The two apostles, Peter and John, the cripple, and four figures, whose heads only are seen, compose the group in the centre : one side of the picture is filled with people going to the temple, and its opposite with others coming from it ; which disposition Raphael has advantageously employed in contrasting these two subordinate groups,



THE LAST OF THE GENTILES
A. J. V. 1850

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by opposing the backs of some of the figures to others which are seen in front, and further contrasting these by several which are in profile.

There is not, perhaps, in the world, a picture so thoroughly characterised, or so artfully managed, as this carton. The moment of Peter's having pronounced the words, "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk," is the time chosen by Raphael; and is the instant when the lame man finds himself suddenly enabled to rise; when the muscles of his limbs, released from the contraction which till now withheld and deprived him of their use, are expanding, and an extraordinary impulse urges him to the exertion of their hitherto useless functions; all which is most amazingly conceived and expressed. At this period, those who were apprized of something extraordinary which was then transacting, are endeavouring to thrust forward on the side of the picture where the cripple is placed; and these, with a woman and boy who are hastily passing on to the temple, together with the inimitable boy in the front of the picture, who is eagerly pulling back one of the figures, remarkably characterise the principal subject of the carton; which is that of the agents of divine power giving strength and agility to the torpid limbs of the man who was born lame. Wonder and amazement are finely expressed in the characters of the spectators; and, on the side of the picture next to Peter, who with great dignity has conferred the divine gift, every thing is still, but expressing silent amazement. Thus, in the parts where dignity should be preserved, all is quiet; and where strength and activity is given, every thing is in motion. The character of the cripple is finely imagined, it is perfectly that of a mean person; and the expression of joy

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and gratitude which appears in it, is finely balanced by a mixture of doubt and astonishment; and he seems scarcely to believe the reality of the blessing he is receiving. The character of Peter is devout and majestic; and that of John is full of divinity, and superlatively graceful; he is represented with the utmost pity and affability concurring with Peter in this act of true piety and charity: the rest of the heads in the same group are finely invented and drawn, particularly that of the old man leaning upon his crutch, and of him who is looking over John's shoulder.

It is remarkable, that the same airs of the head which Raphael has given to the two apostles, are nearly the same with those of the man and woman on that side of the picture; and the action of Peter's arm is repeated in the same man with a very little variation; he has also introduced another cripple into this groupe, whose character is not altogether unlike that of him who is healed; but the expression is of another kind, and shews a malevolence and disinclination to believe the truth of this miracle; which seems to be one reason why he was placed behind the apostle, as a situation most properly adapted to one of his way of thinking; but this figure is of prodigious use, and is moreover a fine contrast to the other; and the repetition in the rest is so judiciously managed, that it has no ill effect; but of this group particular notice will be taken in speaking of the by-works or ornaments of this carton.

There is a wonderful expression of malignity in the character of the man who presses his lips with his finger in the same group: the woman with the child in her arms has a character full of expression, is exquisitely de-

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signed, and perfectly great and graceful. The fine boy in the fore part of the picture, who, being unconcerned, is eager to be going, and pulls the man's garment, is a fine contrast to the figure of the cripple; and at the same time breaks a mass of shadow which would otherwise have had a very disagreeable effect: this boy is also contrasted by another, who is led along hastily by a woman with a basket upon her head; and these, as has already been observed, give motion to that side of the picture. The drapery upon this woman's arm is artfully swelled and folded towards the elbow, and breaks the straitness which would have appeared from her action, and could not but have offended the eye. It will now be proper to speak of the ornaments, and other accidental decorations, which are usually called by-works.

The principal of these are the columns; which, with regard to the picture, are the finest that could possibly be imagined, and in themselves are a proof of the amazing genius of Raphael: The effect of the waving line, as an ornament, is perhaps no where made use of to such advantage, nor better proves its gracefulness. To confirm this assertion, let any one substitute in their stead, or ideally substitute the Ionic, or Corinthian, or any other order; and let it be enriched with flutings, and all the decorations that can possibly be given to those orders, and then compare it with Raphael's. What an astonishing alteration must ensue! How cutting, how disagreeably heavy will the innovation appear! and how very considerably must the picture suffer by the change! Besides, as the columns were arbitrary, and the painter had once deviated from the established rules, he was at liberty to do what he pleased; and therefore Raphael has apparently made use of this licence for the purpose fol-

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lowing: it was doubtless necessary that the principal group should not only possess the centre of the picture, but occupy more space than the others, in order to maintain its character of distinction from the subordinate ones: in consequence of which, Raphael has made the intercolumniation greater between the first and second column than between the second and third, a part of which is cut off by the side of the picture. This being allowed, it will not be difficult to give what is apprehended will be thought a sufficient reason for the repetitions before-mentioned; and why the same number of figures, nearly in the same attitudes (the cripple excepted), were introduced into this group. It is certain, that if this part of the picture had been otherwise managed than it is, by too great a variation of the attitudes from those of the principal group, the inequality of the intercolumniation would have been more apparent; and, consequently, every common observer would have taken the liberty of condemning it as an oversight in Raphael. The great artifice, therefore, is concealed in the similitude of the figures which compose these groups: the same number are employed in both. In the principal group the whole figure of the cripple is seen; in the other the body is large, but being upon his knees, his legs are hid by the column, and the space occupied by his hand and arm, which rests upon a staff, is by no means equivalent to the room gained by the disappearing of his legs; and yet this staff and limb seem to fill up the space. The distance from the knees of the cripple to the column, is greater than that between the feet of the lame man and the same column; and both being near the ground-line or front of the picture, cause a great deception. The woman with a child in her arms is similar to John, but she is placed much nearer the

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column. John's arm is moderately extended, and his hand appears directly over the Cripple's head; the woman's arm is employed in holding the child, and consequently does not appear; and a light well folded piece of drapery supplies the place, and forms a mass which receives the shadowed parts of the cripple's head and body. The man is in an attitude similar to that of Peter, but the column is placed so as to be partly hid by his hand, by which he expresses his astonishment, falls exactly in the centre between the two columns, as does that of Peter in the principal group; but lest this should be too remarkable, the hand of the woman is seen close by it, naturally and gracefully applied to her breast; and this, with the infant's head, make a sufficient variation, and does not in the least destroy the principal intention. It being absolutely necessary to introduce the whole arm of the figure of the man, and the hand being to be placed in the centre, the arm is unavoidably required to be bent rather more than that of Peter; but this was not a sufficient variation, and therefore a kind of short open sleeve which reaches about half way down to the elbow was added; and this also produces another variation. To carry on this artifice in every part, Raphael judged it expedient to have the same number of figures in each group; but whereas in the principal one there are three heads between that of John and the column, and none between that of his and Peter's, so in this there appears but a part of one between the woman and the column, and the other three are placed in the space between the man and woman. The same artifice is also finely kept up in the distant colonade; where, in the same space, two rows of the same columns appear in perspective, and by their contrast occasion the distance between the columns on the opposite side to appear larger than it

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really is. In short, this carton is altogether the most consummate piece of art that probably ever was or ever will be produced.

CARTON IV.

THE DEATH OF ANANIAS.

But Peter said; Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land? Whilst it remained, was it not thine own? And after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? Why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God. And Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost: and great fear came on all that heard these things.—Acts, chap. v. ver. 3, 4, 5.

OF all the various ways ordained by the Almighty for putting a period to the present existence of human nature, there is none so affecting or alarming as the stroke of sudden death; whenever, therefore, this happens, it appears more or less terrible to those who survive, according to the state of the soul at that moment when it is separated from the body. The death of Ananias was, therefore, a subject capable of exciting horror in an extraordinary degree, supposing it to have been only a common accident: but the circumstance of his death was much more terrifying, as it was a manifestation of the divine wrath upon him, “who had not lied unto



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men, but unto God." This alarming event happened at a time when the minds of the people were filled with the amazing things which they both saw and heard; when universal benevolence possessed the hearts of those who adhered to the doctrine taught by the apostles: therefore such an event must have struck those, who were witnesses to it, with horror and reverence; with detestation of the act itself, and with reverential awe for the apostle, whose fore-knowledge of the fraud practised by Ananias, made him openly accuse him in the words abovementioned. Raphael has told this story in a manner worthy of his sublime genius; and the time chosen is so very evident, that it needs not be mentioned.

This carton is composed of three distinct groups, and Ananias is the principal figure; but it required no less than the profound skill of this great master to make him appear so: the figure being prostrate by necessity, must have appeared to some disadvantage had the spectators been all standing, even though they had inclined as much as the two men who are stooping over him; Raphael, therefore, has most judiciously given all the figures in the fore part of the picture such attitudes, as at once perfectly correspond with the story, and make the figure of Ananias more conspicuous. Accordingly, the subordinate figures are all either kneeling or stooping; and these, at the same time, give an inexpressible dignity to the apostles, who are standing, and form a distinct group in the middle of the back part of the picture, in the centre of which Peter is placed, who is described as having just pronounced the accusation. The whole figure of Ananias is inimitably fine, but the expression in his character is amazing; there appears to be strongly marked in the features not only the stroke of death, as a corporeal suf-

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fering, but the agonies of a wounded conscience; from which immediately proceeds the writhing contortions of the body and limbs, the very extremities of which appear to be contracted and convulsed. The character of Peter is also finely imagined and designed; there is a holy severity in his countenance, which is inexpressibly great; his attitude is majestic; and though his situation is something remote, it is impossible to avoid seeing that he is the second principal figure in the picture. The whole group of apostles are characters of great dignity; each seems collected within himself, and revolving upon this terrible catastrophe, and one of them, who is next to Peter, appears with reverential awe to address himself to the Almighty, and is a fine character. Horror, fear, and amazement are blended in the character of the man who is opposed to Ananias; who, by his situation and attitude, appears also to be rendering up his goods to the apostles, and possibly was intended for Joses, called Barnabas, who is mentioned in the latter part of the preceding chapter; and this figure makes the finest contrast imaginable to that of the dying man. The woman next to him discovers her terror in a manner perfectly adapted to her sex, as well as the circumstances of the story. Her fear compels her to turn round, the natural preparative for flight; and this occasions her figure to contrast that of the man before described in a fine manner. The character of John, who is very properly employed in relieving the necessitous persons who compose a part of one of the subordinate groups, is extremely graceful; compassion and benevolence are strongly expressed in his countenance, and his action discovers that he not only relieves them with money, but likewise bestows with it his advice, and appears to exhort them to make a proper use of it. The apostle, who seems to beckon to some

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who are supposed to be out of the picture, to bear testimony of the punishment inflicted on Ananias, is a character of great dignity, and his attitude is finely varied from that of Peter's.

The draperies in this carton are perfectly fine, and extremely well cast; particularly those of the apostles, which are remarkably graceful, and the folds finely disposed and contrasted. That of Ananias requires particular observation; he has less than any other figure in the picture, his arms, legs, and feet, being entirely naked: this, possibly, to some may appear absurd, but it is a fine artifice; the violent agitation of the muscles is thereby made apparent; and the limbs of the figures near him being mostly covered, serve to shew his figure more distinctly, and of course help to discover its consequence. In short, the whole composition of this picture is perfectly great and striking, and is a remarkable instance of the genius of Raphael. In the carton of the *Lame Man Healed*, there is a luxuriancy of fancy displayed in the ornaments with which it is enriched; in this its grandeur, dignity, and effect, are totally derived from the invention and disposition of the characters. Ornaments there are none, and the by-works are extremely plain, and agreeable to the simplicity of the church of Christ in its infant state; the chief of them is the curtain, which is behind the apostles; it is indeed simple, but then it is finely folded, and serves admirably to break the strait line, which is made by the heads of the apostles, which, without this help, must have appeared somewhat disagreeably. The back ground is also artfully varied, and relieved by an opening on one side, and a flight of steps, with figures ascending them, on the other.

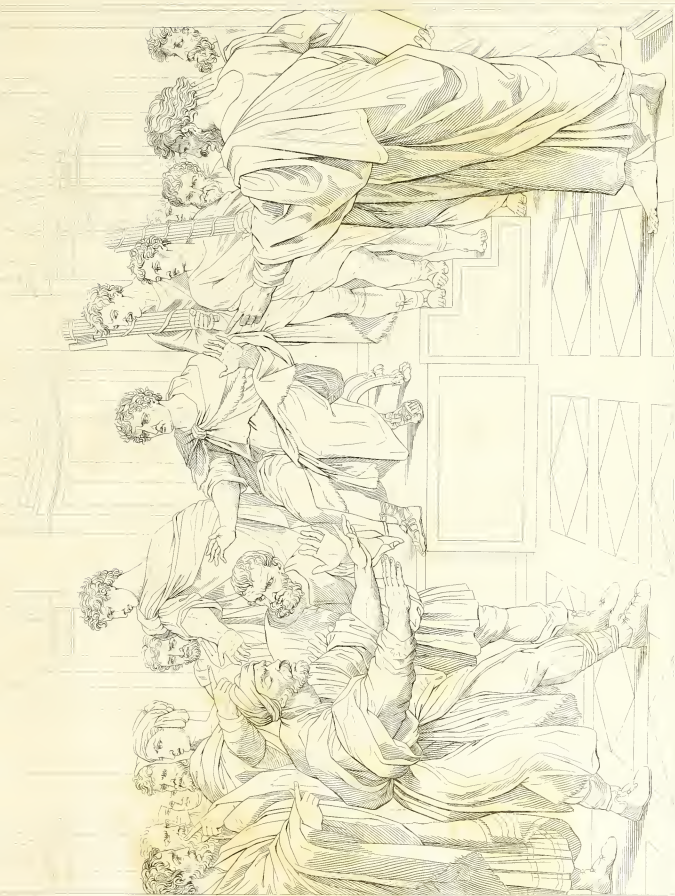
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CARTON V.

ELYMAS, THE SORCERER, STRUCK WITH BLINDNESS.

And now behold the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the light of the sun for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness, and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand.— Acts, chap. xiii. ver. 2.

THOUGH terror and astonishment are strongly expressed in this picture, yet it appears of a different kind, and produces a different effect from that in the carton of the Death of Ananias. The punishment of Elymas was to him dreadful and grievous, and to the beholders terrifying and wonderful; but is apparently considered by them no otherwise than as it relates to this instance of the divine judgment inflicted on him. The death of Ananias inspired horror also, not without a mixture of pity for the sufferer, who, before the discovery of his crime, was probably esteemed as a good and devout man; on the contrary, the sorcerer was a person of whom it may reasonably be judged the people stood in awe; and that he was rather feared on account of his power, than beloved for his virtues. This will evidently appear, when the manner in which Raphael has told this story is considered. Every one of the spectators discovers terror and surprise; but none (except one of the lictors, who stands near the proconsul) discovers the least expression of pity. Elymas, though in the midst of numbers, appears to be alone; and he extends his arms in vain, "seeking some to lead him by the hand:" nor does the



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admirable figure who stands between him and the proconsul, and who with the utmost amazement looks steadfastly in his face, seem inclinable to offer him the least assistance. Indeed, there are but few of the spectators who appear to give any attention at all to him; the majority of them being employed either in relating, or attending to the relation of the punishment inflicted upon him. Elymas, who is the principal figure in this picture, according to the observation of Mr. Richardson, is blind from head to foot; and is altogether a most inimitable character; perhaps Raphael hardly ever conceived one more expressive; and though this great master thought proper to assist the understanding, by making the subordinate figures more fully explain the principal subject, yet this figure alone was sufficient to have done it. Dejected arrogance is amazingly described in his character; together with that shame and confusion, which must naturally have appeared in it when he felt the irresistible force and superiority of the divine power: his attitude is also extremely fine, and can only be thoroughly understood by viewing the picture itself, or a good copy, or print after it. The apostle Paul is the next principal figure; he is placed opposite to the sorcerer, and is represented with one arm extended, as having just denounced sentence upon him, to the execution of which, with a look of holy satisfaction, he seems to demand the proconsul's attention. He is likewise distinguished by a book, which he holds under the other arm. In his character, which appears in profile, the expression is awful and majestic; his whole figure is finely imagined and drawn, full of dignity, and perfectly graceful. The next is the proconsul Sergius Paulus, who is more affected than any of the spectators: terror and astonishment are expressed in his countenance, and evidently discover that

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he feels the force, and is sensible of the equity of the divine judgment; but it appears in a manner perfectly becoming his character, and he sits amazed at the punishment of Elymas, and convinced of the truth of the doctrine preached by the holy apostles. The apostle Barnabas, who stands behind the sorcerer, is employed in explaining his fate to those who by their situation must necessarily be ignorant of it, as being placed behind him; which he is represented as doing with great zeal and energy. The man who stands between Elymas and the proconsul is prodigiously fine; he is, indeed, all amazement and attention; and in his character there is expressed a mixture of doubt, and an eagerness to discover whether the sorcerer's blindness is real or not. The man whose head appears between that of Paul and the side of the picture, is also full of expression; he is apparently a believer, which is shewn by a fine mixture of fear and devotion in his countenance. There is likewise great expression in the lictors, who stand upon the steps; and also in the rest of the characters which compose this picture. The draperies in general are extremely fine, particularly that of Paul, which is noble, well cast, and folded; that of the sorcerer is also finely imagined, and suitable to his character. The scenery, or back ground, of this carton is magnificent, and well adapted; it will be sufficient to say, that in order to break the stiffness of uniformity, Raphael has taken some liberties in the architecture, which produce an effect that makes ample amends for any seeming irregularity.



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CARTON VI.

PAUL AND BARNABAS AT LYSTRA.

And there sat a certain man at Lystra, impotent in his feet, being a cripple from his mother's womb, who never had walked. The same heard Paul speak, who stedfastly beholding him, and perceiving that he had faith to be healed, said with a loud voice, stand upright on thy feet; and he leaped and walked. And when the people saw what Paul had done, they lift up their voices, saying in the speech of Lycaonia, the gods are come down to us in the likeness of men. And they called Barnabas Jupiter, and Paul Mercurius, because he was chief speaker. Then the priest of Jupiter, which was before their city, brought oxen and garlands unto the gates, and would have done sacrifice with the people. Which when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard of, they rent their clothes, and ran in among the people, crying out.—Acts, chap. xiv. ver. 8—14.

IN this carton the simplicity and purity of the Christian religion is finely opposed to the pompous idolatry and superstition of the heathens; the divine behaviour and modesty of the two apostles is infinitely more striking and greater than all the tumult and parade of the sacrifice, which the priests, attended by the people, are about to make to them. The manner in which Raphael has described this ceremony, is perfectly fine and agreeable to the custom of the Romans; and is entirely taken from the bas-relief of the Trajan column, the priests and boys employed in the intended sacrifice being almost exactly

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copied from thence, particularly the priest of Jupiter, who is in all respects the same, except in the drapery, the figure in the column being without any. In the characters of the priests and people there is a general expression of enthusiasm and superstitious fear, which is finely described. Paul is the principal figure in this picture; he is represented as standing upon a kind of step, from whence he is about to descend, in order to stop the mistaken religious fury of the people; and, at the same time, with the utmost grief and perturbation, which is admirably expressed in his countenance, is rending his garment, and exposes part of his breast, which produces a fine effect on the imagination. The apostle Barnabas, who stands behind him, is a fine character; he is seen entirely in shadow; but his attitude and expression are incomparable; grief and pity are blended in his countenance, and he clasps his hands together with a fervour not to be described. Mr. Richardson, in speaking of this carton, and the sacrifice represented in it, says, "The occasion of all that is finely told: the man who was healed of his lameness, is one of the forwardest to express his sense of the divine power, which appeared in those apostles; and to shew it to be him, not only a crutch is under his feet on the ground, but an old man takes up the lappet of his garment, and looks upon the limb, which he remembered to have been crippled, and expresses great devotion and admiration; which sentiments are also seen in the other, with a mixture of joy." Mr. Richardson might have added gratitude also, which is visibly expressed in the character of the cripple: and, indeed, if it be allowable to censure so great a master, the place in which this man is found is liable to some objection. Paul, in looking stedfastly upon him, perceived

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“ he had faith to be healed ;” and he is here represented among the crowd of idolaters, and appears to be one of the most zealous to assist at a ceremony so utterly disagreeable to his holy benefactors : to this it may be objected, that as he probably had not had time to be fully instructed in the Christian faith, this was the only way in which he could possibly testify his gratitude ; but it is submitted, whether he might not, with more propriety, and equal advantage to the picture, have been introduced in the place of the man who is on the same side of the picture with the apostles, employed in bringing a ram to the sacrifice ; or at least in some other situation, in this particular more agreeable to his disposition to receive the religion of Christ. The whole figure of this man is finely designed, and vastly expressive ; but the leg, which the old man is looking at, is remarkably elegant, and was undoubtedly painted from nature ; the figure of the old man is also finely drawn and imagined, and his attitude, which is stooping, brings several subordinate figures into view, which could not otherwise have been seen. The architecture in the back ground of this carton is magnificent ; the forms of the buildings are finely varied ; and the whole together exhibits a noble composition.

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CARTON VII.

PAUL PREACHING AT ATHENS.

Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars-hill, and said, Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious: for as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD; whom, therefore, ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you.—Acts, chap. xvii. ver. 22, 23.

If invention, expression, design, variety, and decorum, are allowed to constitute a fine historical composition, this carton certainly deserves the character it has long maintained, of being one of the greatest performances of Raphael.

This fine picture is divided into three groups; the first of which is composed of four figures, among whom the apostle is eminently distinguished, as indeed he is from every other in the picture; his situation being so extremely remarkable, that he is shewn to the greatest advantage that can possibly be conceived. The man who is about to ascend the steps, the woman behind him, and eight other figures, who are represented standing, compose the second group; and the third is formed by six persons who are sitting: this last is placed between the first and second, nearly in the centre of the picture.

The character of Paul is universally allowed to be the most sublime performance that ever was produced by the



Engraved by Agnew

PAUL PREACHING AT ATHENS

Engraving from the Bible, published by Agnew

Engraved by Agnew

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pencil of Raphael; and Mr. Richardson, who passionately admired this figure, with a warmth peculiar to himself (which perhaps upon this and some similar occasions carried him a little too far), says, "But no historian, or orator, can possibly give me so great an idea of that eloquent and zealous apostle, as that figure of his does; all the fine things related, as said or wrote by him, cannot; for there I see a person, face, air, and action, which no words can sufficiently describe, but which assure me as much as those can, that that man must speak good sense, and to the purpose." Thus much is beyond contradiction, that nothing hitherto produced can give so great an idea of the person of Paul, or can better help to illustrate the divine zeal and elocution which that apostle so eminently possessed, than the awful, majestic, and expressive character which the hand of Raphael has given him.

Raphael has employed every artifice, in order to make the apostle particularly conspicuous; all the figures in the picture are subservient to that purpose; the man and woman at the bottom of the steps are actually nearer to the eye than the apostle, but their situation causes the base line of the picture to cut off part of their height; and as they are both stooping, they are effectually prevented from lessening the importance of the apostle. He has managed the figures that appear behind the apostle, in the same manner, by placing two of them lower than Paul, and the third sitting upon the upper step; by which means they are sufficiently degraded. The figures in the second group, who are seen standing, are situated upon the ground, their heads mostly inclined, and are also at a considerable distance; and

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the manner in which a public oration should be represented, says, "To represent a person haranguing a multitude, consider in the first place, the subject matter on which he is to entertain them; in order to give him an action suitable to the occasion; for instance, if the business be to persuade, let it appear in his gestures; if it be to argue and deduce reasons, let him hold one of the fingers of his left hand between two of those of the right, keeping the other two shut; let his face be turned to the assembly, and his mouth half open, so as that he may appear to speak; if he be sitting, let him seem as about to rise, advancing his head a little forwards; if he be represented standing, let him recline a little with his head and breast towards the people; and let the assembly be seen listening with silence and attention; let all their eyes be fastened on the speaker, and let their actions discover somewhat of admiration; let some old man be seen wondering at what he hears, with his mouth shut, his lips drawn close, wrinkles about the corners of his mouth, the bottom of his cheeks, and in the forehead, occasioned by the eye-brows, which must be raised, near the setting on of the nose; let others be represented sitting, with their fingers clasped within each other, bearing up their left knee; another old man may be seen with his knees thrown across each other, his elbow leaning on his knee, and with his hand supporting his chin, which may be covered with a venerable beard." The similarity of the ideas of these two great men will be better discovered by comparing the carton with the foregoing quotation, where though several things are differently expressed, yet upon the whole the thought is so nearly alike that it might be almost implied that either Leonardo's idea had been put in execution by Raphael; or, could there have been a probability of it, that the latter had dictated to the former when he was composing his book.

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